



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND INSURANCE

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Tennessee State Fire Marshal Leslie Newman Offers Fireworks Safety Tips for Fourth of July Holiday

Nashville, TN- State Fire Marshal Leslie A. Newman wants to remind Tennesseans that while fireworks are a traditional part of Fourth of July celebrations, many people are seriously injured each year by their careless use.

The State Fire Marshal's Office encourages you to leave fireworks to the professionals. If they are legal where you live and you decide to set them off on your own, be sure to follow these important safety tips:

- **Never** allow children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Read and follow all warnings and instructions.
- Be sure other people are out of range before lighting fireworks.
- Only light fireworks on a smooth, flat surface away from the house, dry leaves, and flammable materials.
- Never try to relight fireworks that have not fully functioned.
- Keep a bucket of water and a garden hose nearby in case of a malfunction or fire.

Like matches and lighters, sparklers are not toys and cause hundreds of injuries every year. Sparklers burn hot, can reach temperatures as high as 1200 F, and stay hot long after they've burned out. You wouldn't hand a matchbook or lighter to a child to wave around or play with, so don't give a child a sparkler.

Fireworks can be dangerous, causing serious burn and eye injuries. A new law effective in 2007 prevents children under the age of 16 from purchasing fireworks and those that are age 16 or 17 must have a photo ID to purchase them.

"Please enjoy the holiday at a public display presented by trained professionals, where compliance with state-of-the-art fire codes offers a safer way to celebrate our nation's independence, and avoid consumer fireworks to keep festivities from turning into tragedies," Newman said.

For more information on firework safety, visit www.tennessee.gov/sfm.

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